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(FROM A FEMININE POETIC VIEWPOINT)

BY
ROSE

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SERIOUSLY INCORPORATED

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To my previous audiences and readers, thanks for your support and encouragement to again publish my thoughts and yours. A special thanks to my Programming Editor, Karen Stanley, my Writing Editors, Roslyn Harmon and Ed Johnson. As always, a loving arm of appreciation to my father, LEROY BURNS for feeding me good food on week-ends and reminding me from whence I have come. To LeRoy Thomas, thank you for that special encouragement which only you know how to provide. MAMA, if you were here, I believe you would even approve of Section V. To Mary Moffet, Mark Davis, Howard and RoseMary, you are very special people.

Above all, to my Savior and Lord Jesus Christ, thank you for giving me a new life.

GLOSSARY

It became interesting and delightful when I learned that many of my own associates did not understand some of the terminology and slang presented in my poetry. Some even admitted that perhaps their own "SERIOUSLY INCORPORATED" culture contributed to this limited perspective. Therefore, I am submitting an abbreviated glossary to assist in reading "SERIOUSLY INCORPORATED".

- Blood (reference to a person; of kindred spirit)
- Bout (about)
- BUPPIES (Black Urban Professionals)
- Cause or cauz (because)
- Chitterlings (chitlins; hog intestines cooked for eating)
- Crap (non-sense)
- Dap (a cool or stylish way of walking)
- Gittin' (getting)
- Hood (neighborhood; ghetto usually)
- Jess (just)
- Messin' (messing or being bothered by)
- Muscadine (a grape/plum type of fruit grown in the South)
- Naw (no; negative)
- No Mo (no more or no longer)
- SERIOUSLY INCORPORATED (wanting to be inclusive of that which perpetrates success and power in any given arena; often to the point of losing self-integrity; often losing basic morale values; often losing genuine identity; often referred to as bourgeoisie)
- Sho Nuff (sure enough; affirmative)
- Tater (potato)
- Visine (to clear up one's vision, like the eye drop)
- Word endings with "in'" are "ing" ending words
- Y'all (you all)
- YO! (greetings or getting one's attention)
- Yo' Mama (your mother; negative connotation; can sometimes be an invitation to fight)

DEDICATION

To Adam Landon Davis, my five-year old Sweetie-Pie.

With Love,

Mommy
MOMMY



MY SON

Of course I desire You
to be strong gallant
determined and wise
sensitive honest
with just enough pride
perceptive decisive
a leader - the best
well organized logical
set standards for the rest
articulate handsome
happy secure
mild mannered self-confident
reliable mature
straight forward tenacious
always in good health
courteous protective
possess power and wealth
GOD fearing spirit filled
prepared for any task
loving life moving freely
no regrets of what's past

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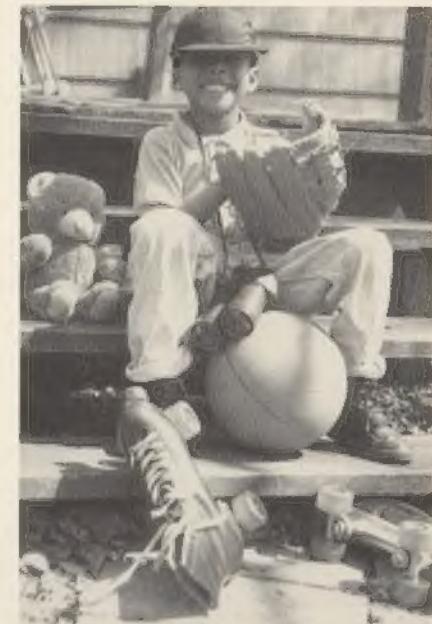
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d...

You fall short on these items
that's okay too
possessing the above can only
enhance the real you
acquiring perfect character
Son, is rarely achieved
but, as a Mother who loves
You...already I'm quite pleased.



CONTENTS

PART I - SPLINTERS IN THE LADDER TO SUCCESS

Splinters In The Ladder To Success	2
She's A Climbing That Corporate Ladder	3
Sexual Harassment	4
Her Desire	5
Pain Plagues The Innocent	6
A Cup of Tea At The White House	7
Lunch With Some Real Women	8
My Girlfriend's Mother When We Were Kids	10
My Girlfriend At 38	11
Mama - Always There For Me	12
Her Dying Prayer	13
Girl Friend	14
Competitive Fast Track	15
Bull S—	16
Creator's Designer Black Male	17
His Favorite Aftershave	18
Brother Man	20
Your Card Please	21
Yo Blood	22
An African Brother I Met	23
Where Are The Black Men Going	24
Juke Box	25
When The Cookie Gets Creamed	26
BUPPIES	28

PART II - BEYOND WATERS COLORS

Beyond Water Colors	30
Fine Art	31
Attitudinal You	32
Chin Up	33
SomeTeen Suicide Syndrome	34
Pretty Braids	36
From Dust To Mud	37
Boys' Games	38
For You, Illiterate Child	39

PART III - SOMETHING KINDA SUNDAYFIED

Where Does My Strength Come From	42
The Black Church Experience	43
Dealing With Fear	44
I'll Settle For Peace	45
A Preacher Once Said	46
Family Trees	47

The Hallelujah Amen Song Poem	48
Some Hell of A Gain	49
Artistic Simplicity	50
African Drums and African Dancer	51
Taste De Le Soul	52

PART IV - BURNT OUT

Burnt Out	54
The Blade Side of the System	55
AIDS	56
My Optional Holiday	57
Punctuality	58
The Fool	59
The Bills	60
Beyond One's Means	61
Plastics Jones or Credit Card Junkie	62
Subtle Racism	63
Beyond The Horizon	64
Cut The Crap	65
A Party Outside of the Hood	66
Decaffeinated	67
Priority	68
Popcorn Gourmet	69
Rochester Minnesota or Someplace Similar	70

PART V - WHEN I FIRST FALL IN LOVE

When I First Fall In Love	72
After The First Time	73
My Darling I Can't	74
Should I Take You Into My Heart	75
Legendary Intrigue	76
Hidden Agenda	77
Savor This Feeling	78
On The Subject of Love	79
Unhealthy Love	80
You Always Ask	81
For Women Who Share Men	82
A Nightmare About Losing You	83
Convenient Friendship	84
It's Time To Relocate	85
Men	86
Lovers' Quarrel	87
To Women Who Once Loved A Preacher	88
And Then You Left Me	89
A Baby I Don't Want You No Mo Blues Song	90
Back To Dark Brown Pantyhose and Things	92
I Love You	93
One Person's Opinion of Marriage	94
Another Side of Marriage	95
Forget It Sister or At Least Forgive	96

I
N
C
O
R
P
O
R
A
T
E
D

S
E
R
I
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U
S
L
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PART I

**SPLINTERS IN THE LADDER
TO SUCCESS**



SPLINTERS IN THE LADDER TO SUCCESS

There ain't no crystal steps like
the poet said
how can one possibly get ahead?
just stifling splinters instead
advantages remain to our
disadvantage as the "going up"
elevator continues to neglect
traditionally denied
access.
still jumping through hoops
swimming across ice cause
skating privileges too are
denied.
solid wedged soles of pumps
and wing tips can not
shield the skin against
camouflaged splinters
when attempting to step
into a survival system
grasping for champagne sips
of power, a mercedes,
a winter time-share on
sandy beaches.
mind basting in disillusion
trying to justify all is well
merely to endure the hell
of podiatrist's tweezers
extracting splinters from your
weary feet aiming desperately
to defeat the set-backs of
lost civil rights acts
and bills of equal opportunity
snatched away by the rich
and loonies or which ever
comes first and before you
know it another inequitable push
places you back on the
first splintered step
...there ain't no crystal
assistance here on the steps of
reality.

SHE'S A CLIMBING THAT CORPORATE LADDER

(FOR THE BLACK WOMAN IN AN ATLANTA MAGAZINE)

Envision a corporate version of
Sheba
her presence alone signifies
power
while her majestic body
exemplifies control
standing proud
countenance displays a
look of security strong
enough to put Ali in
second place
dressed in corporate
grey from the silk of
her blouse all the
way down to the classic
pump resting on a
marble step which seemingly
rolled down from the
corporate heavens
personally
to usher her up with
CEOs just a blowing
their incorporated horns
announcing her arrival
should anyone question whether
she hatched from a leather
brief-case-carrying mentor
who recognized her talent
OR
the outcome of an epic story?
then so be it
because the Sister has
brains and talent
enough to lend
...climb on up
climb on up!

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

He said She looked like She
wanted to be touched
so He touched Her.
She said He threatened
to fire Her if She didn't
...She didn't.

He said Her dresses
beckoned His attention with
each bend and sway
clinging Her hips seductively
openly enhancing Her breasts
dresses for attention
...you know like that blue
silk one of Hers?
She said Her clothes are
conservative and appropriate
for the work place
She takes pride in Her appearance
He said She wears sexy fragrances
each day intentionally
to arouse His masculinity
...you know like that expensive
stuff in the purple bottle
designed to penetrate to the
very core of a man's senses?
He can't control the urge
to taste Her neck which
bears the sensational aroma
She says perfume is as much
a part of Her daily hygiene as
wearing deodorant
After all He wears suits and uses
after-shave, walks
up and down the hallway each day
yet She never saw fit to grab
His butt or press against His
probably little private parts.

She feels violated
robbed of privacy and freedom to
exercise Her personal choice
He says He never meant to
hurt Her - He thought She
wanted it...so He did.

HER DESIRE

Don't ruffle Her
feathers today
the stomp in Her walk
announced the mood
while the rolling
of Her neck says
"She ain't taking
no mess today"
ain't nobody's
business what Her
problem is cause
She's assembling
parts on time
staying abreast with
the rest yet best
you stay clear of
Her today.
She carries Her
coat and purse with
Her each time She
goes to the toilet
when She gets
this way
AND
that ain't to say
it's that time of
the month--
just a need
just a need
just a need
to feel She's
going away someplace
SPECIAL
with a desire
with a strong desire
of returning to a
changed place that
somehow can make
Her feel
SPECIAL.

PAIN PLAGUES THE INNOCENT

(faces of famine in Ethiopia)

She forced her tiny baby to eat
the last crust of molded
too-many-to-count-days-old-bread
for nourishment
for preventive measure
against starvation
last drop of milk from her breast
sucked away many days ago to
the point of blood drops flowing

America gave money to the cause
tis rumored that their government
holds back more
than half the goods
more than half
the good are still
victims of that
pain which plagues the innocent.

A CUP OF TEA AT THE WHITE HOUSE

(FOR MARY MCLOUD BETHUNE)

A proud majestic
black Woman
once sipped tea
from the finest
porcelain
on the finest
linen
amongst national
leaders
at the White House

the Inspired Blacks
to slip
opportunity beyond
moto clay
I gain
strong urgency
to enter
to do more
to learn more
to move more
bowed
in her spirit
which simmers
within each
time
I visit her
Daytona Beach home.

LUNCH WITH SOME REAL WOMEN (AND YES WE DO EAT QUICHE)

Wilma Rudolph:
Top brass bronze elegance
bordered in a stylish
golden setting of security
graceful, poised super-star
...and the food was good in Florida.

Carmelita Myers:
Genuine is an understatement
understanding my pain
without attacking
or placing blame
with ability to make me
elevate the "whys"
exercising her advice
lovely Nellie smile any woman
would purchase if marketed
a friend - my friend
...and the food was good in Atlanta.

Pat McClain Allen:
Girl, you know you bad!
tough MBA sister wanting to
better herself and her family
assisting Bernice into rediscovering
life can be fun.
Struggling for daily Christian
growth making me see some errors
of my many ways
and days of much growth
...and the food was good in Minneapolis.

Linda Sesson Taylor:
History in the making
home girl a positive talk
of the town being
the first woman and
the first Black to run for
judge in Jackson, Tennessee
convincing Russell to
bear the same proudness
it's not in a NAME but
what you claim and do with
yourself, baby
...and the food was good in Tennessee.

Jackie Underwood:
Always giving always sharing
God-mother to my son
brings nothing but warmth
wrapped in packages of
experienced intellect
with ornaments of no regrets
instantly taking on a new
challenge
...and the food was great in Connecticut.

Lou Willie Gill:
You are a family TREASURE
strengthened by Jesus Christ
bring strength to
four-generations of female
responsibilities you inherited
without permission with no
omission of a single one's care
and you wear
the beautiful side of
family survival most
eloquently
I assure you
applaud you
appreciate you
...and the home cooked food was good
at your house in your back yard.

MY GIRLFRIEND'S MOTHER WHEN WE WERE KIDS

(LONELY PERHAPS?)

There is something to be said
perhaps even slightly sad about
a tall coffee cream colored skin
Black Woman who sat on the
front porch swinging
after factory work after sun down
letting her hair down
from pink sponge rollers
sipping ALREADY sweetened
ice-tea smoking a long brown
skinny cigarette
listening to soulful tunes
on her eight-track
and going that's the
way love is
then she'd always join in
on the line...sho nuff how
it is.

MY GIRLFRIEND AT 38

(LONELY PERHAPS?)

There is still something to
be said perhaps even a little sad
about a smart, tough, stylish
professional African American Woman
with beautifully salon finished
auburn colored hair
lounging on her futon chair
serving her guest perrier as she
plays her high tech CD
and going that's the
way love is
and spontaneously unrehearsed
her guest can hear her burst
on time with line...sho nuff how
it is.

MAMA - ALWAYS THERE FOR ME

(IN MEMORY OF MY GRAND-MOTHER, ROSIE)

When I was a baby Mama's soft voice and soft fat thighs served as a cushioned compromise offering security a lap of contentment and nap-sack just for me.

As a little girl, Mama was kind and sort of always there greasing, pressing and braiding my hair scrubbing my rusty knees I remember boycotting stores and traveling to Bells, Tennessee for school shopping one fall supporting the cause of a man named Reverend Martin Luther King someplace in Alabama and Mama said: "Taint no walk too long in this ole world if it means a better place one day fo you, little girl".

During my teens, invariably it seemed Mama had somehow turned mean I just wanted to be grown out on my own or something silly she trusted and understood as I ventured forth to discover teenhood among fields of error soon only to become cultivated by her simply being there for me.

Mama, it's hard being a woman pain often rides my back like a rodeo with sneak dump-attacks from life's saddle of ups and downs but, I just keep on hanging around some days I simply envision your lovely face knowing if you could speak to me encouragingly your kind words would be: "Now, now sweetie-pie, everythang's alright cauz the Lawd and me's with you every day and every night."

HER DYING PRAYER

(In memory of a close young mother)

Please spread your blanket of warmth over me and reduce the chill of months gone past leaving me vacant hardly capable of fighting to hang on another day. A will to live beyond Thanksgiving pushing on into Christmas for the kids' sake please make them (the kids) a bed of comfort to rest on when turbulence attacks their lives. As the weak side of my life speaks to me softly whispering "it's time" I listen I take a deep breath and finally break the bondage and finally break the bondage of earthly pain - Amen.

Girl Friend

(IN MEMORY OF WILLIE MAE)

If only you could play and read to me again
Ah shucks, girl, I don't care which game
to play today so long as it's dusted
in down home flare with a gravel trail
of innocent
girl friend structure.

Pour herbal tea let's you and me sip
the soothing language depicting our
youth and dreams of marriage, children
(a boy and a girl)
allow me to savor the memory of bumpy
bus rides over pipkin road for 20 miles
to school each day one way while passing
two white schools
we were born
before desegregation
before bussing became an issue
before pavement of country roads
before Negro wasn't the word to use

My legs bare bicycle scares from gravel falls
the taste of strawberries and muscadines linger
we took tree vine swing rides with dreams
of escaping red dirt roads on a one-way
ticket to adulthood and city lights
you moved away first - St. Louis a husband
and two beautiful children
(a girl and a boy)
my turn came later - Denver, Minnesota,
Florida, husbands
and two beautiful children
(a girl and a boy)

Tis true about life being so short
for our dreams had chapters yet to be filled
...would be nice to play and hear you read
to me in that down home flare with a gravel
trail of innocent
girl friend structure

COMPETITIVE FAST TRACK

Cited as a fast tracker
zooming
mentally through light
years of accomplishments
never slowing down for
life
assessment sessions
no time no need
got to be traveling on
air powered fuel since
living's too high to get
caught
on the ground
must race faster now
harder than ever and
get back in place
without having been
missed
nor missing a beat
or else rival will
arrive bragging the
news of a mere split
second's worth of
lagging
be it truth or
fabricated long before
your arrival
perpetrated by
envy
determined to be
number one contender
on this vicious competitive
fast track
...is there ever
a true winner?

BULL S...!

The heels on my pumps
are wearing out from
pouncing on your gestures of
inclusion which somehow
traces back to mud holes of
crazy bull s...!
it never fails
the brother sitting in the
corner wears wing tips and
a yellow power tie
(even designer suspenders)
attire seems inappropriate
for the occasion

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had he known perhaps the
true environment, he would
have worn galoshes.

CREATOR'S DESIGNER BLACK MALE

Only YOU can carry that natural
soulful warrior strut from
Africa

The essence of something
strong and marvelous
made up YOUR existence
long before

Imprisoned
fore-parents crossed
ocean waters
long before
nigger, spook, coon, boy
was cheaply lined
in the lapel of somebody's
warped minds
Creator (God)
designed YOU
gorgeous Black Man.
YOU are in popular demand

IMC
your step to a style of
common sense
drop the non-sense
before becoming extinct
...at your own expense.

HIS FAVORITE AFTER-SHAVE

Each morning she turns over
in bed and puts on a special
smile
after inhaling the aroma
of his favorite after-shave
she maintains a good
feeling because of what they
share
she never considers another
man's body touching hers
tremendous feelings of
joy race through her system
from the mere thought of him
creating such intensity it
frightens
her into absolute stillness
she loves him so much
handsome and sexy even
the sparkles in his teeth
could flash against her
chest from across any
room
radiating flirtatious gestures
a proud man a business
professional astute in his
field--he just travels too
much
loving Husband
special kind of Dad
to their children who's
resemblance implies she only
carried them for nine months
patience beyond measure
never yelled when she
dented his new jaguar instead
gently reassured her that's
what auto insurance is for
kissed and held her tightly
until she began to feel his
calmness enter herself
creating total
comfort

...Each morning she gets out
of bed places the cap
on his after-shave bottle
this ritual of leaving his
fragrance out each night
gives her strength to
rise
each day from its aroma
since he has been gone
since the crash
of Flight 107 last
summer
on which he was
killed...she misses him
still...she misses him still.

BROTHER MAN

For some:

just your mere presence
is threatening
they hear imaginary African
war drums pounding from
no where simply because
somewhere
prejudice was fed into
their minds
...perhaps from old jungle movies
...better yet today's evening news.

For some:

you have never been seen
in the flesh
strong portrayal of a big
buck set out to steal the
family jewels and shoot up
on drugs
stereotypical
...perhaps from old jungle movies
...better yet today's evening news.

For some:

your only desire for entrance
into their culture is to
gain access to their
women
they've heard how you abuse
your own and leave your babies
...perhaps from old jungle movies
...better yet today's evening news.

For You:

get wise defeat the crap
you are perceived as a
problem
when you discover YOURSELF
hold back the anger
release your inheritance of
natural power
before allowing
your pride to become crushed
down to graham cracker size crumbs
from the big feet of others'
insecurities brought on
...perhaps from old jungle movies
...better yet today's evening news.

YOUR CARD PLEASE?

(1970's era)

Do you have a business card?
oh let's do lunch
you don't have a card?
sorry then I'm booked
for months.

...must now create a card to enhance
a not so desirable status

Drop your card into
middle class restaurant
glass bowls for
drawings of whatever give aways
being offered that day

Collect and bulletin board review
them when you're bored
compare obnoxious
want-to-be-in-to-what-evertitles

Wear a solid gold type-set
card instead of a Krugerrand
around your neck because cards
will forever reign in America
display it fashionably and
shout it LOUD
...I've got my card, take one
I'm PROUD!

(1980's era)

But, hold it professional maniacs
another statement gadget
enters the act...
"beep" me when you care to join
me for lunch - the beeper bunch!

(1990's era)

Another charmer, "cellular"
car phone - touch tone
legal or illegal business
or pleasure usage it's a must
can't touch tone on that one!

YO BLOOD!

Yo! some of the Brothers and Sisters
they've made it Man!
Yo! made it where Blood?
to the top my Man!
Yo! to the top of what Blood?
guess to their rear-ends
elevator of ignorance runs weird
successfully replacin' brain action
cause minds don't function this way
Yo! how so Blood?
forgotten heritage, forgotten fact
that mere skin color is a hindrance
to many
BUPPIE fever! lost in the
power struggle of the system
lettin' it rule their lives
defyin' self-integrity
even worse...back-stabbin'
their own
skin tone
losin' grip
goin' over the edge
greed, improper perspective
losin' sight of
beauty within
one's own race
thus seeking refuge in
others'
Yo! there are problems, Man!
deep rooted like mooter
grass into the hard core
soil of one's soul
Yo! I don't believe this is
what our Blood
before us and before them
were getting lynched for
and praying to God for
their children and children's
children to overcome.
Yo Blood!
can you relate?
Yo! sorry to say it Man,
but
Yo! I can truly see what you're sayin'.

AN AFRICAN BROTHER I MET

African Brother

mighty fine lookin' in
your French designer suits
Italian hand-made shoes
sporting \$60 an ounce
worth of "emmmmm" fragrance
all over your body...
American nature done
bit you hard, Bro!

Strut your verbal stuff
of going back home
to Africa once your
education here is complete
free yourself
if you can
escape back
when you can free
yourself of the
addictive hold
American nature may
already have on you
my

African Brother.

WHERE ARE THE BLACK MEN GOING

(FOR SOME IN MINNESOTA)

Where are they headed?
I saw one go past me
on 35W South towards someplace
(Edina I imagine)

At a stop light he
glanced at me quickly
without even acknowledging
my smile and certainly
overlooking my presence
he seemed to be concentrating
on which way was out of
something
something long in place
before he was even conceived
Pity
the look on his face
implied a look for another cultural
identity.

DUKE BOX

Saw a Brother in the lunch room
who's eyes danced to a blues
tune against the juke box
wall of his mind
playing a most familiar sound
"ain't nothin' bout this mess new
it jess seems like it cause
it's messin' on you
i said ain't nothin' bout
this mess new
it jess seems like it cause
it's messin' on you"

The man's intellect and training
signified the epitome
of professionalism
colorless shirt, wing tips
exemplified appropriate attire
but the politics!
failing the course perhaps?
He learned to look the look
talk the jargon play the golf
tone down the dapp
of his "hood" walk
but the politics!
campaign of inclusion stops
at someone else's decision poll
not your own, my man!

I walked over to him, dropped
a quarter on his table
and pushed B-4
you let it get you down
I will listen and understand
the tune I know so well...
"everytime i get up
seems there's somebody
waitin' to push me down
i said evertime i get up
seems there's somebody
waitin' to push me down
but ain't nothin' bout
this mess new
naw naw naw
it jess seems like it
cause it's messin' on you."

WHEN A COOKIE GETS CREAMED

(OR AN OREO IF YOU CHOOSE)

(1960s - 1970s)

At first you justifiably proved to them
your self-confidence
sporting that winning grin
landed a high paying job
then
the "Unannounced Challenge" began

You received positive strokes
demonstrated a flexible work attitude
bought dark suits white shirts
power ties
and even wore those
big ole ugly heavy shoes

You matriculated among the finest
earned complex degrees
technically competent
in your field
great on the golf course
spoke in the right dialect
eliminated inner-city connections
"Unannounced Challenge" gets real busy

You were a go getter
displayed potential
felt privileged on the
turf of perceived arrival
no time for demonstrations
and crazy Negro boycotts
you had no civil rights troubles
yet fashionably you sported
an afro hair cut when told
it was okay at the cost
of someone else's struggles

(1980s - 1990s)

you discovered being Black was
cool and okay so you stepped
into yourself one day
then
It seemed all of a sudden
your livelihood changed
you were no longer
perceived the same
team player
paranoid they say
emotional and bitter
good ole boy image
now stripped away
Unannounced challenge was
attacking away.

You now reside in a revolving
door frame of mind
real confused always wondering
back and forth
"what happened after all this time?"
you glance around the premises
and surprise! before your eyes!
a young self-confident individual
wearing introductory rounds
sporting that winning grin
wearing a dark suit
white shirt
power tie
and those big ole ugly heavy shoes.

BUPPIES

I shutter to think you actually
believe success sprouted its seed
under the heels of your nike shoes and
fancy loafers

Your juices originated from a
special vineyard who's heritage is
never to be stored on a shelf of
forgotten silence in your condo or
trunks of your bmw

The spirit of freedom was laboriously
earned for you
to live
to learn
to grow
to pass it on
It is your duty to pass it on...

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PART II

BEYOND WATER COLORS

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BEYOND WATER COLORS

My daughter's innocence of
prejudice saddens me
yet I know a fact-of-life
story
must be told
this time about
her lovely black face
shinny brown nappy
hair
and where equality
becomes erased
based upon race
or skin color
creating definite
shades of truth
drawn far
beyond
water colors.

FINE ART

Little children depict a
fine art
of innocence which I long
to sculpture permanently
into the hearts of
adolescence and adulthood

imagine
a canvass embellished
in peace, equality, trust
overthrowing the realism of
drugs, violence, abuse, prejudice
paint
away worry, fear, sickness

accent
u
a
ting

instead joy, blessings and security
in knowing that life depicts
the fine art of innocence framed
eloquently in LOVE.

ATTITUDINAL YOU

There is a sense of pride that oughta
reside inside the very depths of you
so reach in and grab what's
rightfully yours if you
really care about YOU.

CHIN UP!

(FOR MY DAUGHTER, ROSLYN)

softness

in this world wears
thin unless your
chin
is lined with bones
of steel, honey

yet

holding it up becomes
a must against
society's
cruelty, hatred, greed
instilling

hardness

but you can whip it!
keep that chin up
please
especially during
times when it
feels like hanging
below your
knees.

SOMETEEN SUICIDE SYNDROME

I imagined transforming
your thoughts
into myself and it
terrified me
those cold, blank stares
bored with the absolutes
that reside in you daily
dissatisfied with school
people, family
life threatening yourself
against yourself
lacking security and belief
in my love

passing on failure
developing pessimistic
posture which slumps your
frame of mind into
hopelessness
when did this attitude
really begin?
taking a bottle of pills
solutions not the pain
I feel your needs
there is no gain
in this web of confusion
for me either
I reach out to merely touch
the palms of your hands
please reach back...
for starters
I will even
settle for the touch of
one finger-tip rather
than view your backside
travel off into this
continued journey
of silence
of fear
of suicide...
I do love you.



PRETTY BRAIDS

When you don't feel braids are
pretty little girl
cause all the kids at school
have long blond curls
then the loss is yours but
perhaps my fault
since you are missing your
identity little girl.

You become off sync when
the hour hand of
your mind-set takes
a malfunctioned
stroll backwards then
you can not see
braids as being
pretty little girl.

Applaud the beauty
acknowledge the art
embroidered in style and
rows of distinctive
heritage little girl
learn to wear them proudly.

FROM DUST TO MUD

(For Kaye and the rest of us)

Skinny legs nappy hair
wide eyed inquisitive little girl
anxious to reach the end of that
long narrow dusty cotton row to
an easier life
scratched hands from bolls
pricking too deeply sometimes
causing tiny drops of blood to
peak out
Tennessee hot sun bearing down
so hard against her skin making her
ebony times ebony to the point she'd
forgotten what shade she naturally
possessed
a strong will to take a greyhound bus
one-way to anywhere away and she will
one day
but only to find the escape often renders
itself from dust to mud.

BOYS' GAMES

Boys gittin' dirty from sittin'
on the ground
making weird sounds
like "yo mama" and "hit me man"
and "naw you ain't even bad".
Yeah, boys playin' games
like marbles and snake eye
and silly stuff that's silly
enough to be a boy's game
but all the same
I can beat them at their
play any time on any day
which is the ONLY reason they
never allow me to play anyway
...those silly boys' games.

FOR YOU, ILLITERATE CHILD

Scores of yearning lives
shed blood lost lives
destroyed
seeking freedom to read
to be equal
...for you child

hard labor-ridden bodies
plowed fields cleaned
others' nasty
toilets
toiled in factories
...for you child

stop rotting yourself
in wasted mind-set
resisting knowledge
refusing
to pull yourself out
of hopelessness, child

self-pride with emphasis
on knowledge is free
...but it's not
cheap!
going to increase in value
everyday--the fee?
merely being receptive to
LEARNING.



PART III

SOMETHING KINDA
SUNDAYFIED

WHERE DOES MY STRENGTH COME FROM?

(TO MY SAVIOR, JESUS CHRIST)

embroidered patterns of
wasted time
worrisome rushing waves
against my breasts
I scream
I surrender
I stretch
my hands to
THEE
...tested, tested no more testing
THEE
from whom I know
my blessed strength
flows.

THE BLACK CHURCH EXPERIENCE

The essence of Black Worship will eternally bring about more than just a thing of going to church and sitting on a pew but...

Through dynamic drama only the Black Preacher can portray through exalting melodic sounds of music only the Black Choir can relay

Through spontaneous participation of chants, clapping, foot stomping on Sunday mornings into the late night hours with an afternoon pause for pot-luck of chicken and dressin', collard greens and sweet potato pie

Tis no wonder the Guthrie energized when Gospel at Colonus arrived delivered unlike anything Sophocles could have imagined, but understandable for Black Church Folk and with pride

Through wide-brimmed hats tacked with exaggerated flowers and feathers, high heels, wide-lapel pin-striped suits signaled Sunday going-to-meeting attire worn most proudly when you go to Black Church

Through it all, there is the praise Hallelujah! and glory mixed with the marvellous story of Black History, Black Politics and 30-minutes of listening to Sunday morning Black Church General ANNOUNCEMENTS!

Yes, the essence of Black Worship will eternally bring about more than just a thing of going to church and sitting on a pew.

DEALING WITH FEAR

(INSPIRED BY REV. BETTY REYNOLDS)

The spirit of fear
does not belong to me
I possess better things
and with the light
of righteousness instilled
within my heart
no power on earth
can conquer me.

I'LL SETTLE FOR PEACE

A thunderstorm rages
in my soul
and my heart cries for
calmness to
settle in somehow
perhaps a
bit of sunshine or
a rainbow's
glimpse within my view
within my life
I seek gentle calmness
of the spirit
mere
PEACE.

A PREACHER ONCE SAID...

(FOR REV. JIM PRICE)

...I want very much to confess
of wanting a little
trailer house
a red pick-up truck
and a corner vegetable stand
down in Mississippi
somewhere

maybe come into town once or
twice a month maybe
less
hang up this metropolitan mess
of a life style forsaking
cold weather and freeway
blues

Settle into a small rural
congregation perhaps take on
a wife
who sings and cooks
corn bread from
scratch

As for now I must resign to
saving souls of these
professional
cosmopolitan
congregational folk.

FAMILY TREES

(God Bless You Aunt Lizzie Mae at 85)

FAMILY TREES don't grow
overnight
but are often destroyed in a single
asinine fight
instigated by an uncle, an aunt
a sister or brother and even
more devastating when it's
father or mother

Family ties should extend
beyond
measure be adhesively held
through hardship or pleasure
mistakes occur from cousins
or grand pa, the steps
the fosters and occasionally
grand - ma

Family tradition depicts
honor
embellished deeply with pride
from generation to generation
heritage should be exemplified
by the old, the young
through you and me in order
to preserve the sacred
FAMILY TREES.

THE HALLELUJAH AMEN SONG POEM

There is no time
but the present time
to shout and praise God's name
whether here in Minnesota
South Africa or Desert Shield
The TRUTH is real --
so loudly proclaim
HALLELUJAH, HALLELUJAH, AMEN, AMEN

I know y'all can relate
to excruciating societal
pressures we've gained
influenced by drugs, aids, inequality
somehow we all feel the PAIN
children having children
parents killing THEIR
children from stress
policemen killing OUR
children what a mess!
The TRUTH is real --
so loudly proclaim
HALLELUJAH, HALLELUJAH, AMEN, AMEN

War is alive and killing
innocent people
nuclear bombs and missiles are real
My higher power resides not
in the White House
yet successful praying power
is needed for healthy success
in the White House
Our Miracle cure
already suffered and died
and HE's coming back again
for The TRUTH is real --
so loudly proclaim
HALLELUJAH, HALLELUJAH, AMEN, AMEN.

SOME HELL OF A GAIN

Over aggressive behavior
wrecks the nervous system
when
green blood pumps through the
veins stimulating selfishness
usually chilling the efforts
of team play

such attained success
pays well despite the
cost
of one's soul - perhaps
that makes for some
hell of a gain.

ARTISTIC SIMPLICITY

(SOME OF MINNESOTA's FINEST)

Miripiri and Aiken, Seitu

Stephan and Alvin's paintings

instill life-like patterns

of natural delightfulness

within my heart

Mari and Steeles, Sounds

and Doc's gospel music

unclogs life's mental

arteries as each sweet

note soothingly flows

within my soul

Abdul...show time!

August and Gordon

Leon and Gerri's writings

massage my temples sending

messages of insight

I breath in foresight

digest wisdom without

strain and meditate

What a blessed joy having

access to these and other

artistic simplicities.

AFRICAN DRUMS AND AFRICAN DANCER

There were no telephones no televisions
no headsets no VCRs just sounds of
the beat...the beat...the beat
from the African drums
that pulsated, stimulated the body
all over - clean down to
the feet...the feet...the feet
echoing the news around the
villages throughout the homesteads
landing inside every body who knew
the meaning of
the beat...the beat...the beat
a language the white man could not
understand and the master plan
was to communicate
good news (marriages, births), welfare
warfare, bad news (sickness, death) slave
hunters in the territory news,
take cover news -- all could be heard in
the beat...the beat...the beat...

(Enter the Dancer)

hmm, hmm, hmm, move dan-cer, move dan-cer
move to that controlled language
that jolts the mus-cles, uncontrollably
across your own space and places
your body in sync with
the beat...the beat...the beat
making the African dan-cer create
visual interpretation of the
good news (marriages, births), welfare,
warfare, bad news (sickness, death) slave
hunters in the territory news,
take cover news -- remaining in groove to
the beat...the beat...the beat
move African dan-cer move African dan-cer
across your own space keeping
the language pace set to
the beat...the beat...the beat
of the African drums!

"TASTE DE LE SOUL"
(MOST DELECTABLE AND PROPER)

Fried chicken
and corn bread dressin'
collard greens mixed with smoked
ham hocks, cha cha pickles
chicken and dumplings (pronounced dump-lins)
chitterlings (please, the word is chit-lins)
slab of ribs
sauted in Leroy Burns'
barbecue sauce
(or whomever your
daddy is)
hot louisiana sauce
for sizzling
buffalo and catfish
fried among slices of onion
don't forget the okra
pig feet
pig ear sandwich
some spicy dirty rice
macaroni and cheese (real-not kraft)
sopping up sweet honey
child if
you like corn bread
throw some buttermilk
in the glass and
go for it
first day of every
year serve some
black-eyed peas
oh! and what about
some grits and gravy
for breakfast escorted
by fat-back if you dare
hot biscuits and sorghum (pronounced sah-gum)
stick to your ribs
kind of food...huh? blackberry cobbler
(pronounced cob-bla)
banana pudding (please say pud'en)
sweet-potato pie (it's okay to say tater)
egg custard , coconut cake
homemade ice-cream (just say cream)
and so on and so on...wash it
down with some red soda water
and ALREADY sweetened ice-tea!
(Somebody out there must
know what I'm talkin' about)

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PART IV

BURNT OUT

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BURNT OUT

The absolute hell with
stress tests
cure yourself by using
common sense
reinforced by exercising
sanity
for a change.
Should you find
yourself unable
to handle such
prescription - then
QUICKLY
leave the rest
of us alone!

THE BLADE SIDE OF THE SYSTEM (PAIN)

Pain seeks a place to lodge
in minds and hearts of
the strongest from time to time
someone - anyone - yours
mine.

Opportunities within qualifying grasps
yet unattainable due to
sexism, racism, political criticism,
undeserving promotions
someone's too old while others
encounter unexplainable
demotions.

No relief appears available as
blood-shot eyes scream in agony
from hang-overs, drug downers
hang-ups, chips on shoulders
behind reasons therapists can
ONLY define
but can not fix.

Society owes me nothing?
I owe my children more.
Shame it seems, the blade
side of the system creates
deeper wombs than the finest
surgeon can possibly
repair.

AIDS

It's deadly it's serious
IT'S REAL

It's mixed matched
up and down inside out
uptown downtown
it's him it's her
an unborn child
it's intimate
it's non-racial
it's sad it's lonely
it's blood transfusions
drug shoot-up usage
spreading epidemic
got condom machines
even in girls' rest rooms
to caution you to be
cautious.

MY OPTIONAL HOLIDAY

Just leave ME be
today please

(space, space, space)

free myself of freeway
traffic with ease
no shower or make-up just
curl up under Mama's quilt
offering hand-stitched
security
sipping hot mandarin orange
spice tea
tease me crackling fireplace
sounds make me warm
and cozy

I choose to strongly ignore
a messy house with scattered
little boy toy things
while Maya's gentle poetry
massages the tension and Naje's
soft music caresses my spirit
during this moment of peacefulness
with ME.

PUNCTUALITY (IS IT ONLY ME?)

For those who know me
understand my unforeseen
interventions
realizing that I honestly have
no intentions
of consistently running late
yet scheduled times and dates
tend inevitably to find
a certain "me" arriving a
tad behind
in desperate attempt to show up
on time
darn it! for once I'll make
punctuality
some embarrassing moments have
occurred unbeknownst to me
skirt ripped in the back
panty hose instantly become
rail-road tracks
one shoe is blue the other is brown
under-slip is hanging too far down
take a sip of coffee sit it on the desk
it spills all over my NOW needed project
rushing to vacation my car gets wrecked
forgot where I was headed -- what the heck!

despite these incidents being
all reality
darn it! I remain determined to make
punctuality!

THE FOOL

nothing but stupid immature unwise
ignorant
some illiterate, mostly educated
some pretentious, aloof, heathens
self-righteous
some altogether missing the boat
others fighting to stay afloat
lacking, backstabbing, grinning
over-indulgence
losers, wrongful winners, drugs
alcohol, stealing, chasing love
thinking he loves you cause
he gave you a nice dinner
and all the wrong stuff.

...continuance of THE FOOL

be understanding of
the "fool"
for most assuredly
the "fool"
feels error-free
totally of sound-mind
always the victim and
believes everyone else is
the "fool"
if nothing more
it behoves us all
to be patient with
each other
for most assuredly
there lurks
occasional "foolishness"
in us all from
time to time.

THE BILLS

When I get the blues
it's caused by the bills
piles of 'em.
I hate paying
the gas bill
the light bill
the water bill
the grocery and car note bill
I'm confused about
the phone bill
what's local or long
distance bill
doctor's bill
not to mention
prescription bill
and the dress shop bill

The whole thing blows up in
my face and I get
billed
for not having paid
bills
so now I'm ready to be
wined and dined by nice
people like you who like
to foot the
bill.

BEYOND ONE'S MEANS

Dreams of raising a
kid or two
with spit-clean sidewalks
cul du sac
solar energized house
and a mercedes or two
keys to private clubs
while sending
kids to private schools
a boat in the Keys
tied to an
Inter-Costal knot
from tropical fever of
Jones' keep up

dinner each evening
equivalent to
dining at the ritz
good domestic
help is essential to
ornament the dwelling

...take a check point
of this success
bills galore???

then, I suggest an awakening
and cut back on \$\$\$\$\$ing.

PLASTICS JONES or CREDIT CARD JUNKIE

Thought of having a party to celebrate the burning of all my plastics so I charged a hall and refreshments

my wallet was too small to carry all those designer plastic beauties so I charged a larger one with windows to easier find the little cuties

feeling not so cute such a weight increase best to charge some dresses to camouflage celluloid or take a healthy route to lick this fat bout so just put those aerobics on my gold plastic please.

SUBTLE RACISM

Had I written a poem for every weird look for every nasty undertone not to mention times disregarded discarded though visibly in attendance prompted by ignorance envy, insecurity more pitiful than offending ...had I written a poem depicting each of my own experiences of subtle racism by now I would have quite a repertoire.

BEYOND THE HORIZON (FOR EUROPEAN AMERICANS)

A different perspective lies beyond
every individual's horizon
only with opened eyes can you see
often it means spreading your
wings and soaring over wheat fields
beyond country waters and
tasting the flavors of urban
ghettos
for yourself.

Experience being rejected, kicked or beaten
because you are different
if you are Red, Yellow or Black
you may already know
if you are White
take hold and go
on a field trip to Harlem
North Minneapolis, L.A.
Chicago or the "real" South
you say
you visited
Atlanta that's good, but
did you take a look in the real
side of the HOOD?
(that's beyond peach tree plaza)

What about our democratic
grand U.S?
let's face it people
we're living in a mess
beyond the horizon of
our immediate world
lurks dark storms unfit for
men, women, boys and girls.

European Americans -- (White People)
it's very much up to you
to clear the view.

CUT THE CRAP (TO SNEAKY RACISTS)

I regurgitate sour
expectations taken in from
your prejudice entree
garnished in lies and
negative perceptions

You flaunt a tray of
false eloquence when faking
me a welcome while perpetrating
absolute stupidity
during the stumbling fumbling
toe stepping tune of
real asinine-hood
do yourself a favor and
cut the crap!

A PARTY OUTSIDE OF THE HOOD

...no
i don't care for brie
thank you for the offer
avocadoes? don't think
so
caviar must be missing
corn meal batter
deep-fried style
(or something)
keep the rest
pass on water cress
sandwiches until
a later date another
time perhaps
when I'm really
hungry or
when you visit me.

DECAFFEINATED

Take a decaffeinated cup
of laughter
an attitude
of nutri-sweet
a bit
of non-dairy charm
and voila!
You've concocted
a GENUINE
fresh brewed phony!

PRIORITY

I must save my energy or
at least channel it
towards a direction
perpetrating peace.

Too little action for
such a large group
equates to ineffectiveness
for the most part.

I listen to the wise guys
while waiting desperately
for the wise to surface
thus yielding among many
practically zero hit rate.

POPCORN GOURMET

(FOR CARMELITA WHO NOW EATS POPCORN)

Those who understand the grandeur
of life's precious delicacies
can relate to the following

Shopping is fine, but can
be enhanced the first chance
one finds a good popcorn stand

I do want to see the movie at the show
but if the popcorn sucks then shucks
I'll just wait until home video

The smell alone makes me feel home-made
and comforts me sometimes despite
the craziness around
generally I can be happy in any
little town, once GOOD popcorn
has been found.

(Don't let anyone tell you differently
popcorn is a definite gourmet which
must be DONE RIGHT)

ROCHESTER, MINNESOTA OR SOMEPLACE SIMILAR

Some place beautifully designed
in Scandinavian hand-crafted
setting
trendsetters devotionally heal
the sick through traditional
training
ask certain visitors standing
outside the marbled etched
walls of heritage which direction
the statue aims?
does its countenance bare
invisible blinders
perhaps gazing past those
at a disadvantage...
comes with the territory
I hear, yet some of us find
ourselves living here
pretentiously as the winter
resident geese on
silver lake's disguised
tropical water during -25 temp
actually believing we've made it
to paradise for the winter

A past a culture a place to be from
vizines our paths clearly
through occasional dust
stirred up from steps of
power-play giants
no time for divided withdrawal
when America is still free for all
and God
remains in control
Rochesters of the world
mark not the end of the
freeway...after all
survival packages of
chitterlings and greens
can be imported now upon request.

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PART V

WHEN I FIRST FALL IN LOVE

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WHEN I FIRST FALL IN LOVE

Wish

I could always feel like I feel
when I first fall in love
nothing is so stimulating
invigorating and motivating
as the birth of love.

don't

mind traffic jams or grocery lines
falling behind in my chores
so what if I missed that
once-a-year sale
or if the electronic
garage door failed
to open at -25 degree temperature
nothing bothers or gets me frazzled
when the newness of love unravels.

sweet

and tender my total self surrenders
to love's conception causing
maximum contentment no resentment
I simply - more than universe - wish
that I could always feel like I feel
when I first fall in

love.



AFTER THE FIRST TIME

After the first time

...will he remember?

If so, how will he remember

will he think about it

If so, what will he think about

will he forget

If so, why and how could he forget?



MY DARLING I CAN'T

Of course my breasts ache in
surging Sheba passion aroused
by Solomon stimulants from you

LOVE

quickly formed without breaking for air
without waiting for the right sign
ends even quicker...therefore my
darling, I can't.

Your offer flatters my womanhood
I think of potential pleasure merely from
observing your finer than Billy Dee smile
all the while listening to your Jesse could
take lessons from talk all day all night
again and again...therefore my
darling, I can't.

Your soft satin sheets lure me closer
and closer into your affectionate grip
until a sharp knock against my conscious
opens the door to my thoughts reminding
me the time is not right
for this
for us
due to circumstances of
reality truth and time...therefore my
darling, I can't.

SHOULD I TAKE YOU INTO MY HEART

Should I take you into
my heart as a lover, then what?
do I cook lasagna with
authentic ingredients in it
no short cuts
or stroke your handsome face
and grace your ego with words
of adoration when you
have experienced
crap-spat-upon-me-days

Shall I laugh at your
monotone jokes even at
sunrise or bring you tequila
fruit juice surprises
to refreshen your palate prior to
your surprising me once again
just when I thought you had
discovered me totally

How dumb of me to ask the
question "should I take you
into my heart"
tis obvious, you already
reside there.

LEGENDARY INTRIGUE

I could write on and on about
you
simply because my thoughts
go on and on about
you
should you leave me one day
die or merely walk away still
I would write on and on about
you

decades after I've grown old
and died suppose some
romantic adventuress decides
after reading this poem to probe
my children's children in
attempt to learn just who you
were

(I laugh deeply over the thought)

no doubt in my mind that person
will find legendary intrigue
which can only lead
that person to also
write on and on about
you.

HIDDEN AGENDA

I have come to take you home
with me NOW!
hold you close
become your thoughts of
pleasure
let you tip-toe into
my sanctioned parlor
offering comfort and
peace
which is foreign to
this 8 to 5 rat race.

Exit the reality of
this pitiful wretched
place NOW!
into my boudoir of
sweet fragrance
satin and berries of
pleasure
let me cushion you in
serenity among feathers
designed to float away
mental anguish
break yourself from
everything NOW!
with the exception of
ME
for this evening I assure
YOU
marks the beginning
of extended splendor
YES
I have an hidden agenda in
mind for you NOW!

SAVOR THIS FEELING

There have been countless
stolen kisses, light brushes
against a thigh in passing
finger-tip touches
causing heat rushes
to stir feverishly at
will
savor this feeling.

There have been countless
stolen visits wisped off
into the nights, the days
at breakfast, a cocktail
a drive under the country
moonlight even city lights
and stars have witnessed
this tiny seed's mystical
growth sprout beyond a cheap thrill
stirred so feverishly at
will
savor this feeling.

There have been countless
stolen promises of eternal
commitments wishing away all
cluttered rubbish destined
to pace ourselves at a tempo
of unresolved mental anguish
the beat transforms into
melodious soothing passion
from a mere touch or glance
stirred feverishly at
will
savor this feeling.

ON THE SUBJECT OF LOVE

I was just going to write something
real serious about love
but somehow the thought slipped
my mind when I became
angry with you
my desire to write something
real clear on the subject
of love seems to have escaped
me completely...

...okay now that we have made up
I can write something
real interesting about love being
wrapped in a package sensitive
to the touch
pulsates every inch of me
day by day
in a way that spreads
a sweet tune of harps and flutes
everywhere over and over again
leaving a taste divinely
defined as succulent fresh
strawberries in the springtime
sparkling like well chilled
spumante wine
love
bubbles and tingles
it teases, it pleases
me enough just to write
something serious on the subject
while it feels good to me
while I am not angry with you.

It's been awhile since
you've heard from the man
you love...

UNHEALTHY LOVE

...too much sleep too much to eat
withdrawal from friends
confiding in no one but talking
too much to everyone
sharp headaches, short tempered
no interest in what's going on
around you

...reporting to work yet not
really working with it
home from work until it's
time to report back to work
week ends and week starts
all running together
all running too slowly
a should-have-been-a-minute-flu
becomes a week-long nuisance
since you lack resistance to
fight back and then
... he calls

...wants to see you
you know you shouldn't
cause he's a jerk yet
you know you're dying
cause you're a jerk
for letting him be your
dose of recovery - so naturally
you say "yes".

YOU ALWAYS ASK...

"...Why am I always wrong?"

you are not!
but if you feel you must
always ask such a question
then one thing is clear
something is wrong.

FOR WOMEN WHO SHARE MEN

Perhaps you have actually
lost a very precious
element of your naturalness
or your best
became
exceptionally less than
recognizable to yourself

Ah! You say you know how
to survive and yet
you settle yourself into
a second-class role

Understand that you do have
a first-class choice in
the matter...very much so.

A NIGHTMARE ABOUT LOSING YOU

i dreamed i had tossed you in
the air
you fell and broke into many
little pieces
i saw her black hair scattered
everywhere perhaps soon
to be a bird's nest
i imagined you both being
wisped off into never-never-ville
until
she rushed over to your now
fragmented parts and carefully
began fixing you back together
again
that's when i fell and broke
myself from myself and
poof - i too became scattered
everywhere
into millions of pieces seeing
my brown hair soon to become
a bird's nest - i screamed
i awakened in fear with chills
you held me close and whispered
"go back to sleep - i'll
always be right here".

CONVENIENT FRIENDSHIP

Happiness comes from within
one's self I am told
unless others make you tick
at their convenience
where is that special friend
when you need him
when your needs run deeper
than occasional whatevers?
perhaps he conveniently crept
out in silence to avoid
disturbing you from pain
since he knows loneliness
hurts you worse than bills or
political mess and stress
my guess is that he's
ego tripping - out toasting
the town avoiding you until
it becomes convenient to
be friends again.

IT'S TIME TO RELOCATE (WHEN THE RELATIONSHIP IS OVER)

The movers came today
packed
everything
visible
including yesterday old
garbage
simply
because
it couldn't relocate itself
despite
the smell
of having
lived here with you too long.

MEN

(CERTAINLY NOT APPLICABLE TO EX'S)

There are millions of men
in the world

some are short tall skinny
wealthy poor fat lazy
and so on and so on and so on

yet I always seem to attract
the crazy ones!

LOVER'S QUARREL

(WHO'S FAULT WAS IT TO START WITH)

Who really is the culprit
here?

"Not I, "dear"
"Nor I, "dear"

TO WOMEN WHO ONCE LOVED A PREACHER

(WHEN HE DECIDED TO CALL IT QUILTS)

Once I knew you well
even loved you just
as much
unconditionally despite your
calling - your profession
you claimed to have
known me too yet
perhaps
this is not the
time for us, you said.

Mother nature's wand
blew a fuse as the
WE came along all
hot and anxious
timing seemed right
for me - a cursed
season for you
perhaps
a later time, you said.

I say peace be with you
as you minister to
the world while attempting
to mend your own soul
together with
crazy glue
read my lips...
I can now comfortably say
perhaps
another time for you!

...AND THEN YOU LEFT ME

You saw me getting involved
and becoming wrapped up in
your love-
making me only want to
be with you only.
You accepted myself over
and over like honey
and cinnamon creating the
taste of sensationalism
your love-
making me crave every ounce
of your sweetness.
You knew me inside out
upside down until
no other degree existed
except only to grow
deeper and stronger in
your love-
making me hopelessly trapped
...and then you left me.

A BABY I DON'T WANT YOU NO MO BLUES SONG

Never will you ever
find a love so deep as mine
I said never will you ever
find a love so deep as mine
deep rooted unconditional
right here in the presence of "self"
gonna be mighty hard to find
and never will you locate among your
other little hussy associates
I'm here to tell you, baby,
never will you locate among your
little bimbo associates
the strength the support
the compassion and the rhyme
you're losin' this time.

Ah the passion, darlin' right down
to washin' your dirty drawers
I said the passion, darlin' I never
mind washin' your dirty drawers
and in the mid-night hours of
your flus and fevers
or the attentive listenin'
to your constant whinin'
I was always there to be
your lover and a friend
the way it's suppose to be
through thick and thin
darlin' you ain't gonna find
a love as sensational as mine
ah Naw, ah Naw.

Never can you ever create
this authentic quality
but you might find something
that can imitate
I said a mouth full, baby
and it went beyond your
level of comprehension, so
let me repeat it...
I said never can you ever
create this authentic quality
but you might find something
that can imitate
cause the real thing is me, baby
right here in the presence of "self"
can't no other woman duplicate.

I trusted you once
I trusted you twice
I trusted you again and again
now you can just wave bye bye to Ms Nice
darlin' here's the score
I just don't wanna see you
no mo - no mo - no mo.

Sho nuff you always look fine
wearing that handsome grin
that double breasted suit
too bad I only know now what
I should have known then
those shoes you wearin'
dear put the divine
in shine
but, that's okay sugar
cause with you all that
glitters sho ain't gold
yes, yes, yes honey, you may
look fine, but all that glitters
sho nuff ain't gold
and let me tell you once mo...
darlin' here's the score
right here in the presence of "self"
I'm finally securely sayin'
I don't wanna see you
no mo - no mo - no mo.

(Ah yeah, baby, just like that
stock market you be playin' everyday
your loss is somebody else's good gain...)

BACK TO DARK BROWN PANTYHOSE AND THINGS

(DEDICATED TO BLACK MEN WHO HAVE RETURNED "HOME")

Awakened by her soft lips at 6:45 each morning
preparing him for the 7:00 o'clock final alarm
he likes it that way

Stumbling half-consciously over the Essence Magazine
she left lying on the floor last night
hating to leave her warmth
loving the thought that she is there

Weeding his way through her dark brown pantyhose
hanging in the bathroom brings on his first
smile for the day
he likes it that way

Reaching for shaving cream, he glimpses her bronze
color make-up, afro hair conditioner
he can't help but smile proudly
she always looks so good

He felt like a fool for having left her once for
whiter things in life
prayed if only she would take him back
(and she did)
back to where he belonged forever
back to dark brown pantyhose and things
he knows
she believes
he prefers it that way.

I LOVE YOU

It requires very little
to say I love you
and I do love you
with all my heart
and I do love you
with a lot of soul
fulness I do
I do I do
love you.

ONE PERSON'S OPINION OF MARRIAGE

Okay...i could watch sports all day Sunday and all day long on New Year's even worse visit your Mama or wash your sweaty socks and smelly underwear with my "things" or i could fix you chicken with black pepper instead of red fold the newspaper back when i'm done to your taste pick up your waste of course, i could let the stereo blast while the t.v. is on and always take OUR kids shopping with ME to avoid disturbing YOU with THEIR noise i could pick up your white shirts from the cleaners every week before i go into work and later listen to you whine about your hard day when you come home late for dinner without even a courtesy phone call then reheat your food

certainly i could do all of these things if we were to get married, ...well, i don't think so!

ANOTHER SIDE OF MARRIAGE

Naw! Naw! Naw! Now!
You expect me to tag along
all day in a shopping mall
you must be crazy!
have your family eat over here
every Sunday afternoon--naw! naw!
you want ME to run to the store for
a loaf of bread after YOU just spent
\$250 of MY money on groceries
what? mow the lawn
on my golf day?
the bathroom is cluttered
with your make-up and stuff
so why should i clean a bathroom?
that bed has a million little ruffle
pillows on it and you expect me to
make it up simply cause i got up last
take out the trash!
you are asking me why i didn't
cook since i came home first
...naw! naw! naw! now! wait a minute
you got another headache tonight
after all i do for you!

FORGET IT SISTER or AT LEAST FORGIVE

You can no longer spend
your best years
wallowing in the bowels
of wasted memories
...let it go.

His other preference is
freedom of choice
best you discontinue
mental desires to
lynch--no point.
Isn't worth losing the
pot of hot grits you
desire tossing in his lap
where a pea-brain dropped and now
resides...would only be a waste
of your precious food!

Stop nagging over
what isn't worth the
stink in yesterday-old
pampers that baby wore
who doesn't get to see
Da Da at the dinner
table anymore.

Go on with your life
Sister
and be proud of it
forget he's gone or
at least forgive.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

ROSE was born in Jackson, Tennessee and raised by her paternal grand and great-grand mothers Rosie and Allie Gill. Therefore, experiencing femininity incorporated with perseverance, faith and love may even be an understatement. The sincerity, wisdom and strength of these wonderful women instilled solid values critically necessary in surviving this "SERIOUSLY INCORPORATED" society.

ROSE feels that life offers an exciting journey when navigated by faith. For centuries, African, Colored, Negro, Black and African American People have traveled distances guided by faith. She believes all people must truly be sensitive to each other's culture in order to plow through daily trials and tribulations incited by racism. "SERIOUSLY INCORPORATED" touches on the gain and/or pain portion of the "piece of pie" inclusiveness from an African American woman's poetic perspective.

ROSE currently resides in Rochester, Minnesota. Her first book of poetry, "AND THEN I FELT" was published in 1980. Much of her work has been published in various anthologies. She has performed public readings in churches, schools, theaters, television and radio across the country. Rose is the proud parent of two lovely children, Roslyn age 15 and Adam age 5.

SERIOUSLY INCORPORATED

**by
ROSE**



Since the Civil Rights Movement of the late 60's and 70's, the visibility of African Americans in corporate America has become more prominent. Although the Movement opened doors and People of Color were hired, "Unannounced Challenge" began to surface - political survival. There appears to be continued rockiness in the weary land. Is becoming "SERIOUSLY INCORPORATED" truly the cost intended for gaining a "piece of the pie"?